

The musical score is written on a treble clef staff in common time (C). It consists of three lines of music. The first line starts with a C chord and contains the lyrics: "In the Black Ball Lines I served my time, to me hoo-dah, to me hoo-dah in a". The second line starts with a C chord, followed by a G7 chord, and contains the lyrics: "full rigged ship and in her prime, to me hoodah, ho-da day. Blow boys blow, for". The third line starts with an F chord, followed by C, F, C, G7, and C chords, and contains the lyrics: "Ca-lifor-ni-o, for there's plenty of gold, as I am told, on the banks of the Sa-cra-men-to." The score ends with a double bar line.

In the Black Ball Lines
I served my time,
To me hoodah! To me hoodah!
In a full rigged ship
and in her prime,
To me hoodah, hoodah, day!
Blow, boys, blow,
For Californio!
For there's plenty of gold,
So I've been told,
On the banks of the Sacramento!

Around Cap Horn in seventy days,
To me hoodah! To me hoodah!
Around Cap Horn is a mighty long ways,
To me hoodah, hoodah, day!
Blow, boys, blow, ...

Oh, the mate he whacked me
around and around,
To me hoodah! To me hoodah!
And I wished I was home
all safe and sound,
To me hoodah, hoodah, day!
Blow, boys, blow, ...

Oh we were the boys to make her go,
To me hoodah! To me hoodah!
Around Cap Horne in the frost and snow,
To me hoodah, hoodah, day!
Blow, boys, blow, ...

When we was tracking around Cap Horn,
To me hoodah! To me hoodah!
I often wished I'd never been born,
To me hoodah, hoodah, day!
Blow, boys, blow, ...

To the Sacramento we are bound away,
To me hoodah! To me hoodah!
To the Sacramento it's a hell of a way,
To me hoodah, hoodah, day!
Blow, boys, blow, ...

Oh, when we got the the Frisco docks,
To me hoodah! To me hoodah!
The girls were all
in their Sunday frocks,
To me hoodah, hoodah, day!
Blow, boys, blow, ...